

## PEACE STUDIES IN THE U.S.: PEACE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE?

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Try as he will, Man seems incapable of forming an international community, with power and prestige great enough to bring social restraint upon collective egoism. (...) The growing intelligence of mankind seems not to be growing rapidly enough to achieve mastery over the social problems, which advances of technology create.

(Niebuhr 1960: 48–50)

The article presents the history and state of peace studies (PS) in U.S. academia – a subject of many controversies and misunderstandings. First, there is an historical overview of what is now called PS. Then, an attempt to define and categorize the subject is made. Next, there is an analysis of the present state of PS – a survey of scholarly journals in the field, leading organizations that supports it, and presentation of sample courses that are appears in PS programs. At the conclusion of the article there is a discussion whether the subject is faithful to its purpose – both as academic enterprise and as an attempt to bring about a more peaceful world.

The belief that war can be abolished by learning, and through it by bettering the human condition, is deeply rooted in the American psyche. This belief originates from the more idealistic part of the liberal tradition that underpins it. To commence war in the sole purpose of ending all wars, as President Wilson claimed, is a good example of the phenomenon. To be able to do this one must know the horror of armed conflict, and have the will to end it once and for all, and the means to accomplish this task. Hence one must become a student of one of the many peace programs in contemporary US higher education.

The aim of this article is to present peace studies (PS) in US academia, how it emerged from general the interest in peace present among scholars in America sprung by the two world wars, how it evolved throughout the twentieth century and what its specifics are. I will begin with a historical overview of PS, then I will try to present a definition of the subject and its categorization. Then I will describe the present state of the field and sample courses that may be found in PS programs, and to conclude I will try to assess the quality of PS and how it is faithful to its purpose.

## Historical Overview

The birth of peace studies is strongly connected with the creation of International Relations as a distinct field of academic research. In the interwar period the dominant approach to IR was idealism with its focus on moral qualities of international politics, the role of international organization and law, and the solution to the problem of war in the form of collective security. The IR scholars of the time searched for ways in which the above-mentioned aspects of their research could prevent another disaster such as World War I. In a sense, then, all IR in the 1920s and 1930s were, in a way peace studies. The institutionalization of the field followed under auspices of the League of Nations and private donors interested in pacific movements. IR departments were created at many universities. Among the first were – Aberystwyth (1919) and the London School of Economics (1923) in France – Paris Notre Dame (1925) and Council on Foreign Affairs in the US (1923) (Łoś-Nowak 2000: 21).

After World War II the situation in IR changed in such a way that it no longer could be associated with peace studies. The first great debate in IR was precisely the cause of this situation. The debate took place mainly in the latter part of the 1940s between idealists and realists, although in the collective memory of the IR discipline the arguments of realists prevailed. As realists, with their grim vision of human relations and pervasiveness of power in world politics, dominated the field, idealists were outcast from IR. It is reasonable to argue that some of them found their place within PS programs. Thus, peace studies as an academic discipline in the United States began at the brink of the 1950s.<sup>1</sup> At first, US peace studies were perceived as a way to find a view undistorted by particularistic, bipolar interests on the prospects of more peaceful co-existence of nations. In its beginnings PS were treated as a supplement to other social sciences such as political science, sociology and IR, and they were based on theorems, methods and axioms. At the time peace studies were idle and devoid of the ideological fervor that marked their evolution later on (London 1988: 31–32).

The image of peace studies in the United States changed dramatically at the end of the 1960s. The radical movements of the time, the revolution of '68 and wide social disapproval of the war in Vietnam had profound consequences for PS. The first one was a general rise of interest in peace and various aspects of human rights and emancipation. It gave a great momentum to the creation of new PS programs. With new departments opened, for example in Manhattan College (1968) and Colgate University (1969), peace studies bloomed in this period (Harris, Fisk, Rank 1998). However, all this came at a price. The radicalization of American society and ideological fervor of contest movements found their way into peace studies. Formal questions of international law or the norms of the society of nations were substituted with ideological and political questions rallied under the banner of "human rights." In the 1970s PS extended to issues such as gender, environment and ecology, starvation, development, etc. Thus, peace scholars changed the focus of their study. The new PS began to be called procesual or holistic in nature. The venture that started as theoretical inquiry into the nature of conflict changed into arguing for radical change of the social status quo. A change that needs to be preceded by change in the natural environment, gender status, the distribution of wealth. Only then, argued the peace scholars of 1970s,

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<sup>1</sup> The first department and program called "peace studies" was opened at Manchester College in Indiana in 1948 (Harris, Fisk, Rank 1998).

will peace be attainable. Therefore, PS started to include into its program postulates of radical criticism of American society. Given the atmosphere of that particular time one is not surprised that more traditional approaches to the questions of war and peace, such as security studies, were eclipsed by the new movements in peace studies. This ideological radicalization also had another consequence. PS in the 1970s strived for academic acceptance, yet given its state, no wonder that the mainstream academic community in the USA perceived them as a playground for ideologists rather than a respectable academic endeavor (London 1988: 32–34, 40). This situation was somewhat remedied by the creation of the United States Institute of Peace (1984), an organization funded by the US government, yet the preception of PS as not quite serious and not very academic prevailed.

The next period of profound significance to peace studies was the end of the 1980s. The end of the Cold War left many IR scholars, whose theories were much more developed, clueless and peace studies also had an intellectual problem assessing this event. Although the notion of the “End of History” was widespread, it had a paradoxical impact upon peace studies. If history ended, so did war as a part of history. Thus, the interest in peace studies faded – without two blocks threatening each other with nuclear destruction, and the triumph of democracy combined with democratic peace that was supposed to follow, many people who had been previously interested in PS changed their academic choices. It was even more so, as part of American society started to appreciate traditional American isolationism. It was further reinforced by the conservative turn in American society – with PS dominated by leftists and idealists, funding problems began to appear in the late 1980s. and 1990s. Another problem was the ageing of the faculty that ran the courses in peace studies programs. A great majority of them joined the field on the wave of enthusiasm in the 1960s and 1970s, and at the brink of the new century some of them retired and the above-mentioned funding problems partially prevented new scholars from replacing them. The other problem with PS in the 1990s was its research and educational focus. PS research interests expanded and included a constantly growing range of subjects connected with domestic issues now related to peace. It resulted in growing problems with research and learning methods. This was connected with the perennial problem of peace studies, namely their recognition by the mainstream social sciences as a legitimate academic field. They were further undermined in this respect by the renaissance of security and conflict resolution studies. Both were perceived as much more academic than peace studies due to their methods and coherence (Harris, Fisk, Rank 1998).

What helped peace studies to overcome this crisis was in a sense a paradox. The return of history represented by the collapsing twin towers of the WTC meant that there was still some peace to achieve abroad – peace introduced by the US marines for the American government, and peace that should be introduced by the educational efforts of idealists who reminded themselves about peace studies. Yet the future of PS is still uncertain. Although new programs and courses are being developed in the American academic world, the problems I mentioned above still persist. Time will tell in which direction PS will turn – whether they will be a playground for leftist ideologies of world peace and descend into academic oblivion, or follow the road of professionalization leading to a social science paradise of supposed rigor and precision.

At the end of this short historical overview I would like to present brief biographical notes of some of the major intellectual figures that stood behind the genesis of

peace studies, for a history of a social phenomenon without the people by whom it took shape would be a hollow one.

The first of the PS “founding fathers” was Johan Galtung. He was a Norwegian and was born in 1930 in Oslo. He was a mathematician and sociologist. As one of the founders of peace studies he helped to create and led such important organizations as the International Peace Research Institute, established in 1959, and International Peace Research Association which, started its activity in 1964. His major publications in the field of peace studies are: *Peace, violence and imperialism* (1974), *Peace Research – Education – Action* (1975) and *Peace By Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (1996). But beside these he wrote many other works on various subjects such as social research and global communication. He developed fundamental theoretical concepts which gave the newly developed field a much needed spine. Among them were such classical distinctions as direct/structural violence and positive/negative peace. Although mainly a European scholar he has worked in US academia – as a visiting professor at Columbia and Princeton. His works have been highly appreciated, quoted and recognized by American PS scholars.

Another scholar who was also not a native of the US, yet made a great impact on American Peace Studies, was Anatol Rapoport (1911–2007). He was born in Russia and emigrated to the US in 1922. There he obtained a Ph.D. degree in mathematics in 1941. He contributed to the general systems theory, mathematical biology and to the mathematical modeling of social interaction and stochastic models of cognition. At the time of the Vietnam War, as a way to express his disapproval of U.S. policy, he moved to Canada and there he founded the peace studies program at the University of Toronto. For his distinguished work in the field of peace studies and as a peace activist, he won the Lenz International Peace Research Prize in 1976. He lived in Canada until the time of his death, conducting his work both in academia and outside of it. Although he completed most of his later works and taught in Canada his voice was well heard in the US and inspired important research within American peace studies.

The last two figures of particular importance to US peace studies are the married couple of Kenneth and Elise Boulding. Kenneth Boulding (1910–1993) was a man of many interests. He was an economist, educator, peace activist, devoted Quaker and systems scientist. He played a major role in the creation of General Systems Theory and the founding of numerous ongoing intellectual projects in economics, social science and peace studies. As a prolific writer he wrote many books on peace: *The Economics of Peace* (1945), *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory* (1962), *International Systems: Peace, Conflict Resolution, and Politics* (1975), *Stable Peace* (1978), *Toward the Twenty-First Century: Political Economy, Social Systems, and World Peace* (1985). His wife, Elise M. Boulding, was born in 1920 in Norway, and as a child she emigrated to the US. She is a Quaker sociologist, author and one of the major contributors to the founding of the academic discipline of Peace Studies. Her works, written over many decades, range from discussion of the family as a foundation for peace, to reinventing international peaceful “global culture.” One of the most interesting aspects of her work is the emphasis on the role of women and family in the peace process. Both of them fit into the American tradition that combines religious belief with engagement in the endeavor of promoting a more peaceful world.

What is intriguing about these people is their vast intellectual horizons. They did not feel the need to confine themselves to one discipline, and in fact one may argue

that peace studies owe their interdisciplinary nature, to some extent, to this fact. The other thing they had in common was engagement not only in narrowly defined academic activity – they all felt that the case for peace should be forwarded to everyone, not only specialists and scholars. Thus, on the one hand their dedication to making the world a better place is something to be praised from a humanistic point of view. Yet, on the other hand, a preoccupation with disciplinal and professional respect ever-present in American social sciences was necessarily a source of many criticisms in their direction made by academics that cherished a positivistic ideal of value free-science. This leads to the broader problem of the academic recognition of Peace Studies, which was mentioned earlier. But whether one is eager to grant PS the status of an independent field of inquiry, or classify it in the realm of ideology, the great role of Anatol Rapoport, Johan Galtung, and Kenneth and Elise Boulding in the founding of peace studies is undisputed.

## Definition and Categorization of Peace Studies

As it was presented in the historical part of this article PS is quite an eclectic subject. Thus, it is difficult to present a coherent definition of the field. The first two definitions I would like to present focus on the melioristic aspect of peace studies as a way to promote peace through education and scholarly effort. They picture PS as:

“An academic field which identifies and analyzes the violent and nonviolent behaviors as well as the structural mechanisms attending social conflicts with a view towards understanding those processes which lead to a more desirable human condition (Dugan 1989: 74).”

And:

“Peace studies explores organized nonviolence and violence; their relationship to society, behavior, and consciousness; and ways of working toward a just and harmonious world community (Forcey 1989: 7).”

A more recent definition tries to describe a dimension of PS which was not present in the previous ones, that is its characteristics as an academic enterprise:

“An interdisciplinary field with a practical, melioristic orientation. It can be pursued in different ways from the vantage points of the different disciplines that contribute to it. (...), peace studies sits in the interstices between differing traditional disciplines, each with their own more or less defined methodologies. Depending on the problem under investigation, peace studies may borrow methodology from other disciplines at the service of its project (Mason 2002: 15).”

The image of peace studies that emerges from these definitions is twofold. First we get a practice that should supposedly lead to a better, less violent world. This is acquired by studying present conditions of war and conflicts, and through this study an understanding of them is found. With that understanding, PS contributes to finding solutions to the Above-mentioned problems. The second image of peace studies is as an interdisciplinary field without methodology of its own. Methods used are borrowed from other fields, according to their usefulness in attaining the goal of “peace through research.”

Yet this is not undisputed in peace studies itself. Generally among peace scholars we may find two broad approaches to their subject. The first one is paradigmatic. It postulates the greater coherence of peace studies as a distinct academic discipline, with its own subject matter, organization and methods. This would enable PS to acquire the much-needed academic recognition in the US. The other approach is in opposition to the first. It perceives peace studies as a committed social science with no strict disciplinary boundaries. It stresses the role of the interdisciplinary mode of conducting peace research, arguing that it will make it possible to study complicated problems of peace and conflict in an appropriate, multifaceted way. The way out of this controversy, some peace scholars argue, may be found in the creation of a common vocabulary of terms and definitions that could be a common base for peace research. On the one hand it would give means of communication between scholars of different methodologies and originating from different disciplines, while on the other hand it would not deprive the field of its diversity (Kemp 1983: 73–74).

An interesting taxonomy of approaches to peace studies from the vantage point of conflict resolution was presented by Luis Kreisberg. He differentiated them according to the scope of each particular approach, which could be domestic, on a world system scale or on the level of interaction between social actors. He also grouped them by the way in which each approach searches for a solution to conflict situations. The taxonomy is presented in the following table, in which the names of scholars each representing particular approach are in brackets:

<b>Peacemaking Issues by Peace Research Approaches and Arenas (Kreisberg, 403)</b>			
<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Arenas</b>		
	<b>Domestic</b>	<b>World-System</b>	<b>Relationship</b>
Critical demystification, analysis of current conditions	(1) Military-industrial complex, elite machinations of public, gender socialization (Senghass, Sanders, Khaldor)	(2) Economic dependency, hegemonic domination (Chomsky, Wallerstein, Cardoso, Faletto)	(3) Misunderstanding, arms race, misperception (Jervis, Janis, White)
Futurist, imagining new options	(4) Feminism, peace education, human rights (Boulding, Brock-Utne, Rear-don)	(5) Transnational social movements, positive peace (Mendlovitz, Walker, Galtung, Mitrany)	(6) GRIT, conflict resolution workshops, common security (Os-good, Burton, Fisher, Ury, Raiffa, Boserup, Mack)
Actualized positive moves of past and present	(7) Nonviolent defense, peace movements (Solo, Sharp, Lofland, Marullo)	(8) Institutionalized regulation, peace keeping (Alger, Singer)	(9) Mediation, Tit-for-Tat, conflict resolution, Track II, arms control, non-violent sanctions (Axelrod, Kreisberg, Stephanson, Brecovith, Kelman, Rubin)

As the table shows, approaches to peace studies vary greatly. Kreisberg considers peace scholars to be very diverse individuals with various intellectual backgrounds. It clearly shows how peace studies are in fact more about mental predisposition toward the research subject of peace and conflict than a coherent academic discipline. Besides the general interest in peace and conflict, it is hard to find any common points between critical and Marxist scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein and Noam Chomsky, realist IR theorists using rather classical methodology such as Robert Jervis, and social scientists employing rational choice, game theory and a formal systemic approach such as Robert Axelrod.

## Peace Studies: the Present State of the Field in the U.S.

To assess the present state of peace studies I will present the most important scholarly journals, important organizations, and universities and colleges with the most renowned peace programs and courses.

Peace studies as an academic endeavor has gathered substantial organizational support. Because of the above-mentioned problems with the definition of peace research and its coherence, it is the organizations that support it that play a key role in the exchange of information and ideas between PS scholars of various approaches. Below are the most important organizations that animate and support peace studies in the American academic world.

As it was mentioned, the creation of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in 1984 was one of the cornerstones in the development of peace studies in the US. The mission statement of the organization is "to prevent and resolve violent international conflicts, promote post-conflict stability and development, increase conflict management capacity, tools, and intellectual capital worldwide." The third part of this statement is of particular interest from the view point of this article. The USIP funds peace research through publications of works in the field, by giving grants and financial support to research projects and by organizing conferences on various contemporary issues concerning conflicts and peace. It also engages in cooperation with the US academic world and in education providing further support to peace studies as an educational enterprise ([usip.org](http://usip.org)).

The Peace History Society (PHS) was established in 1964 by a group of historians who wanted to promote more peace research in their discipline. At first it was called the Conference on Peace Research in History and changed its name to the present version in 1994. The PHS is an affiliated society of the American Historical Association and a member of the National Co-ordinating Committee for the Promotion of History, the International Peace Research Association, and the International Congress of Historical Sciences. Among its statutory aims are: encouragement, support, coordination and communication to the public of scholarly research on peace, nonviolence, and social justice. PHS organizes various conferences covering peace and justice issues and publishes *Peace & Change*, one of the leading journals in the field of peace studies. It also awards scholars for an outstanding English-language journal article or a book chapter on peace history (Charles DeBenedetti Prize), an outstanding English-language first

book or dissertation (Scott Bills Prize) and an award for lifetime achievement for its members ([peacehistorysociety.org](http://peacehistorysociety.org)).

The Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) was created in 2001. It originated from the merge of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education and Development and Peace Studies Association. In the mission statement we can read that the PJSA is mainly focused on “the promotion of peace studies within universities, colleges and K-12 grade levels; the forging of alliances among educators, students, activists, and other peace practitioners in order to enhance each other’s work on peace, conflict and non-violence; the creation and nurturing of alternatives to structures of inequality and injustice, war and violence through education, research and action.” The PJSA is also a North American associate of the International Peace Research Association. It finances annual conferences attended by international and American peace scholars. The association also awards the most renowned and active teachers, scholars, activists, and distinguished peace and justice proponents by recognizing their service, accomplishments, and excellence at a ceremony held during the PJSA annual conference. It also publishes the Global Directory of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution Programs (now the 7<sup>th</sup> edition from 2006 is also accessible online by subscription), and co-publishes *Peace & Change* with the Peace History Society ([peacejusticestudies.org](http://peacejusticestudies.org)).

The International Peace Research Association (IPRA) emerged at the conference organized by the Quaker International Conferences and Seminars in Clarens, Switzerland, 16-20 August 1963. IPRA was founded in 1964 by Bert V.A. Roling, John Burton, Ljubivoje Acimovic, Jerzy Sawicki, and Johan Galtung. Since then it has organized “21 biennial general conferences, the venues of which have been chosen with a view to reflect the association’s global scope.” Although an international enterprise, IPRA should be considered as one of the main nodes in the global network of peace science, and as such it plays a considerable role in US peace studies. Moreover, the association has a long tradition of cooperation with the UN Economic and Social Council. It was granted consultative status as a roster organization of ECOSOC and is granted seats for two organization heads, for one main representative and four additional ones at the New York headquarters and the Vienna and Geneva offices. The mission statement from the association’s statute presents the organization’s main aims as “to promote national and international studies and teaching relating to the pursuit of world peace, to facilitate contacts between scholars and educators throughout the world, to encourage the international dissemination of results of research in the field and of information on significant developments in peace research (art. 3 of the IPRA statute).” Among the various activities of the association there are organization of conferences, exchange of information and contact between peace scholars from all over the globe. IPRA is also the publisher of *International Journal of Peace Studies*, the most widely recognized journal in the field ([soc.kuleuven.be](http://soc.kuleuven.be)).

From the many periodical publications concerning issues such as peace and justice that play an important role in peace studies in the United States, these most renowned and representative are the following:

*Peace & Change* is a journal that was founded in 1964 and is currently edited by Robbie Lieberman and Barry Glen. *Peace & Change* is currently published on behalf of the Peace History Society and Justice Studies Association. The journal focuses on the “scholarly and interpretative articles on the achievement of a peaceful, just and



humane society.” Archives with previous issues are available on the journal’s webpage by subscription ([blackwellpublishing.com](http://blackwellpublishing.com)).

*Peace Review* was primarily established by John Harris at Stanford University in 1992 and is now edited by Robert Elias at the University of San Francisco and published by Taylor and Francis Routledge Publishing Company. On its international editorial board there appear such prominent figures in Peace Studies as Elise Boulding and Johan Galtung. *Peace Review* is a fully peer-reviewed academic journal and as its webpage emphasizes, its interests focus on “current issues and controversies that underline the promotion of a more peaceful world ([usfca.edu](http://usfca.edu)).”

The *International Journal of Peace Studies* published by the International Peace Research Association, first appeared in 1996. Although not a “natively” American journal, it is well-known in the US community of peace researchers. Currently, one may find such renowned scholars as Elise Boulding, Johan Galtung, Birgit Broock-Utne and David Singer on its editorial board. The following statement from the journal’s webpage aptly states its mission and interests “The journal promotes discussion about various issues in peace research, including but not limited to, security systems, nonviolent social change, peace and environmental movements, sustainable development, global environmental politics, human rights, self-determination, economic equity, conflict resolution, disarmament, and peace education.” The journal’s webpage offers a full archive of previous issues ([gmu.edu](http://gmu.edu)).

Peace studies as an academic endeavor would not exist without programs held at US universities and colleges. The magnitude of peace studies in American academia is shown by sheer numbers: in North America there are more than 250 programs that can be roughly attributed to peace studies, they are held at universities and colleges in 38 American states and counties ([peacestudies.org](http://peacestudies.org)). Among the most recognized and renowned are the programs present at the following American Universities: Berkeley – Peace and Conflict Studies (PACS), Collgate – Peace and Conflict Studies (P-con), Stanford – Peace Studies at the Centre for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), Tufts – Peace and Justice Studies, Columbia – Arnold A. Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies, Penn State University – Peace and Conflict Studies at the Science, Technology & Society Program, Harvard – Interstate Conflict Program at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Viewed as by some driven by anti-American leftist ideology, to some they represent the genuine interest in bettering the global human condition ([discoverthenetworks.org](http://discoverthenetworks.org)). Peace studies programs offers education on both undergraduate and graduate level, with some universities offering interdisciplinary PhD programs. Despite the problem highlighted in historical overview PS appear to bloom in the first decade of new century, with new programs founded and given wide social appreciation.

The courses present in the US peace studies programs cover a wide range of subjects and issues concerning peace and justice themes. Typical core and elective curses taught in PS programs in America are the following.<sup>2</sup>

Core courses:

- Introduction to peace studies – usually serves as a broad survey of the field. Introduces key theoretical concepts and issues. Presents the history of the discipline and its current developments.

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<sup>2</sup> The following are typical courses, of my own selection and compilation, from those being offered by Berkeley, Collgate, Columbia, Stanford, Tufts, Penn State Universities.

- International relations – serves as a reference point to the peace studies perspective. Presents the variety of approaches to world politics and their relevance to the subject of peace studies.
- Introduction to sociology/political science – both introduce basic features of their respective disciplines in a manner useful for peace studies students, enabling them to develop a broader, interdisciplinary understanding of the conditions needed for stable peace.

Typical electives:

- Theories of peace – presents an extended analysis of theories and approaches that scrutinize the causes of conflicts as well as means to avoid them and establish conditions for stable peace.
- War (various contexts) – introduces war as a subject of study, its causes and consequences. The subject may be approached from many different points of view – ideological and theoretical.
- Conflict resolution and mediation – such courses give practice-oriented guidelines for conflict resolution and prevention based on different approaches: games theory, mediation techniques and the best practices of international peacemaking institutions.
- Gender (various subjects) – analyzes the impact of gender on many issue areas and practices related to PS. Considers the role of women in the peace process as well as their treatment during violent conflicts and international politics.
- Human rights and social justice – develops the concept of human rights and links it to the broad issues of social justice as a prerequisite to the achievement of stable peace.
- War and literature – presents war as a problem present in literature. Analyzes the aesthetics of various novels, poems and dramas in accordance with war and peace and how they assess human experience in this area.
- History of peace – introduces a historical perspective on peace movements through-out modern history, as well as lessons in history that can be useful from the vantage point of peace keeping-activities.

The courses presented show the interdisciplinary nature of peace studies. They range from social, scientific, formal knowledge to literary and historical interpretations and value-laden issues. The wide spectrum of knowledge about peace is analyzed by scholars from different perspectives and ideological standings. As such, they represent the dual nature of peace studies, as an academic discipline aspiring to social science status, and as the representation of ideological belief that peace can be forwarded by research and education. Where these two poles converge, there lies the true value of peace studies. Where they are taken to extremes, they change into impractical, abstract theorizing or ideological ranting and indoctrination.

## Conclusion: Peace through Knowledge?

The belief that peace can be acquired by bettering the human condition, which in turn could be attained through learning and proper education, is undisputedly a part of the American liberal psyche. Peace studies in the US should be viewed from such a perspective. This does not deny their importance or impact, but only a statement of what I perceive as a fact. Yet this situation bears various consequences. It is highly arguable

whether PS will ever acquire high academic status. The other question is whether or not it really needs it. I would argue that peace studies educates people who later work for a variety of international and American NGO's, and in this way contribute to a better global future. On the other hand, the more formal academic fields of International Relations, Security Studies and the like train staff for American policy and governmental organizations. Such a gap can create communication problems, as was seen in the case of the latest American engagements abroad. It is also arguable whether the sole concept of peace through learning which underpins peace studies in the US is a valid one. One may hope for it, but Reinhold Niebuhr, a great American social thinker and Protestant theologian, was very pessimistic about it. He and other realists such as Hans Morgenthau, George Keenan and Henry Kissinger (to name only a few) constitute the other, grim side of American thinking about the prospect of peace and social justice among nations. One can hope for the best namely a the balance between these opposing views. As an element of this balance, though, US peace studies clearly proves its own *ratio existendi*.

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